

¶ By the King.

¶ A Proclamation for restraint of the disordered trading for Tobacco.



Hereas VVee, out of the dislike VVee had of the vse of Tobacco, tending to a generall and new corruption both of mens bodies and maners, and yet neuerthelesse holding it of the two more tolerable, that the same should be imported amongst many other vanities and superfluities, which came from beyond the Seas, then permitted to be planted here within this Realme, thereby to abuse and misemploy the soile of this fruitfull Kingdome, did by Our Proclamation dated the thirteth day of December now last past straitly charge and commaund all and every person and persons, of what degree or condition soever, That they or any of them by themselves, their seruants, Workemen or labourers, should not from and after the second day of February then next following, presume to sow, set or plant, or cause to be sown, set or planted within this Our Realme of England, and the Dominion of Wales, any sort or kinde of Tobacco whatsoever, and that they, or any of them, should not maintaine or continue any olde stockes or plants of Tobacco formerly sown or planted, but should forthwith utterly destroy and root vp the same. And whereas we haue taken into Our Royall consideration aswell the great waste and consumption of the wealth of Our Kingdomes, as the endangering & impairing the health of Our Subjects, by the inordinate libertie and abuse of Tobacco, being a weed of no necessary vse, and but of late yeeres brought into Our Dominions, and being credibly informed, that divers Tobacconists, and other meane persons taking vpon them to trade and aduenture into the parts beyond the Seas for Tobacco, to the intent to foreshall and engrosse the said commoditie, vpon vndermerchantlike conditions, doe transpoyt much Gold bullion and Coyne out of Our Kingdomes, and doe barter and vent the Staple commodities of Our Realme at vnder-values, to the intent to buy Tobacco, to the discredit of Our natiue merchandizes, and extreame enhansing of the rates and prices of Tobacco, and the great disturbance and decay of the Trade of the orderly and good Merchant: we taking the premisses into Our Princely consideration, and being desirous to put a remedie to the said inconueniences, which wee haue long endeauoured, though with lesse effect then wee expected, haue resolued to make some further redresse, by restraining the disordered traffique in that Commoditie, and reducing it into the hands of able persons that may manage the same without inconuenience, whereby the generall abuse may be taken away, and the necessary vse (if any be) may be preserued. We doe therefore not only by these presents, straitly charge and commaund, That Our said Proclamation restraining the planting of Tobacco, be in every respect obserued and performed according to the tenour thereof, vpon the penalties therein contained; but also that no person or persons whatsoever, Englishmen, Denziers or Strangers, (other then such as shall be authorized and appointed thereunto by Letters Patents vnder Our great Seale of England) doe import or cause to be imported into this Our Realme of England or Dominion of Wales, or any part of them or either of them, any Tobacco, of what nature, kind, or sort soever, after the tenth day of July next ensuing the date hereof, from any the parts beyond the Seas, vpon paine of forfeiture to Us of all such Tobacco so to be imported contrary to the true meaning of these Presents, and vpon such further paines and penalties as by the Lawes and Statutes of this Realme, or by the severitie or censure of Our Court of Starrechamber may be inflicted vpon the offendours, for contempt of this Our Royall command. And likewise that no Master, Merchant, or Purser of any Ship or other Vessel, doe at any time or times after the said tenth day of July, presume or attempt to take into their ships to be imported into this Realme and Dominion, or either of them, any sort, maner, or quantity of Tobacco whatsoever, but onely to the vse of such person and persons as shalbe so as aforesaid authorized and appointed vnder Our great Seale of England to import the same, & which shalbe by them, their deputies, seruants or factors delivered to the said Masters, Merchants or Purser of ships to be imported, vpon the paines and penalties aforesaid.

And to the intent that no such offendour may colour or hide his offence and contempt, by shadowing the Tobacco to be brought in, contrary to Our pleasure before expressed, vnder pretence of former store, we doe hereby signifie and declare Our will and pleasure, and doe straitly charge and command, That all and every person and persons which now haue, or hereafter shall haue within or neere the Cities of London or Westminster, in their hands, custody or possession, any Tobacco heretofore imported, or hereafter and before the said tenth day of July now next ensu-

ing to be imported into this Realme, amounting to the quantitie of ten pounds Weight or aboue, shall before the said tenth day of July now next comming, bring the same vnto the house commonly called, The Hawke and Feasant, situate in Cornehill in the said Cittie of London, and shall cause the same to be there sealed and marked by such person and persons, and with such marke or Seale as by Us shalbe for that purpose assigned and appointed, without giving any Fee or allowance for the said Seale or marke.

And to the intent that the Tobacco to be hereafter imported by warrant or Authoritie vnder Our great Seale, may be knownen and distinguished from such as shall be secretly and without warrant broughte in by stealth, we doe likewise charge and command, that all such Tobacco as from and after the said tenth day of July shall be imported by force of any such warrant or Authoritie and none other, except the olde stoe aforesaid to be sealed as aforesaid, shall be sealed and marked with such Seale and marke as aforesaid. And we doe hereby prohibite all person and persons from and after the said tenth day of July, to buy, bter, sell or vent vnto the said Kingdome and Dominion, or either of them, any Roll or other grosse quantitie of Tobacco whatsoeuer, before the same be so as aforesaid marked or sealed, vpon paine of forfeiture vnto Us of all such Tobacco so bought, btered, solde or vented contrary to the intent of these presents, and vpon such further penalties as by Our Lawes, or by the censure of Our Court of Starrechamber may be inflicted vpon the offenders, as contemners of Our Royall command.

And for the better execution of this Our Pleasure, wee doe hereby command all and singular Customers, Comptrollers, Searchers, Waiters, and other officers attending in all and euery the Ports, Creekes, or places of lading or unlading, for the taking, collecting, or receiving of any Our Customes, Subsidies or other duties, to take notice of this Our pleasure; and we do hereby command, and give power and authority vnto them, and every or any of them, from time to time, as well to search any Ship or other Vessell or Bottome, riding or lying vnto any Port, Hauen or Creeke within their severall Charge and place of attendance, for all Tobacco imported contrary to the intent of this Our Proclamation, and the same being found, to seize and take to Our vse, as also to take notice of the names, and apprehend the bringers in, and buyers of the same, to the end they may receive condigne punishment for their offences, vpon paine that every of the said Officers which shalbe found negligent, remisse or corrupt therein, shall lose his place and entertainment, and vndergoe such paines and penalties as by Our Lawes, or the censure of Our said Court of Starrechamber may be inflicted vpon them for the same.

And likewise we doe hereby will, ordaine and appoint, That it shal and may be lawfull to and for such person and persons, as shalbe so as aforesaid authorized and appointed by Letters patents vnder Our great Seale, to import Tobacco by himselfe or themselues, or his or their Deputies or Deputies, with a lawfull Officer to enter into any suspected places at lawfull and conuenient times, and there search, discouer and finde out any Tobacco imported, btered, solde or vented, not marked or sealed as aforesaid, contrary to the true meaning hereof, and all such Tobacco so found, to seize, take away and dispose of, and the owners thereof, or in whose custody the same shalbe found, to informe and complaine of, to the end they may receive punishment according to Our pleasure before herein declared.

And further we doe by these presents will and require all and singular Mayors, Sheriffes, Justices of peace, Bayliffes, Constables, Headboroughes, Customers, Comptrollers, Searchers, Waiters, and all other Our Officers and Ministers whatsoeuer, That they and euery of them in their severall places and offices be diligent and attendant in the execution of this Our Proclamation, and also aiding and assisting vnto such person and persons, and his and their Deputies and Assiges as we shall so as aforesaid authorize and appoint to import Tobacco, aswell in any search for discouery of any acte or actes to be performed contrary to the intent of these presents, as otherwise in the doing or executing of any matter or thing for the accomplishment of this Our Royall Command. And lastly Our will and pleasure is, and wee doe hereby charge and command Our Attorney generall for the time being, to informe against such persons in Our Court of Starrechamber from time to time, whose contempt and disobedience against this Our Royall command shall merit the censure of that Court.

Given at Our Manour of Greenwich the nine and twentieth day of Iune, in the eighteenth yeere of Our
Reigne of England, France and Ireland, and of Scotland the three and fiftieth.

God save the King.

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ANNO D.O.M. M.DC.XX.